

Cheon Il Guk Missionaries Holy Week 4-Day Workshop in the Dominican Republic

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Bright and warm smiles here in the Dominican Republic!

Last week we had an exciting Easter!

The Dominican Republic is a very Catholic country so they take the entire week to celebrate. This week is known as the Holy Week. Many people are given time off of work and students are given a break from school. For them, the Holy Week is a very special week meant for spiritual practices, celebration and events. It's like any major holiday in the U.S. because people go on outings or back to their hometowns and take the weekend to spend time with the family.



All the staff, leaders, and participants on the first day on the workshop after arriving to La Finca

Our CARP family spent time together in a very special way as well! We held a 4 day Workshop from

Thursday March 29th to Sunday April 1st in the countryside of Bonao in the Dominican Republic at a beautiful workshop site known as La Finca. This seminar consisted of two different workshop groups receiving different education ; one group being members who were newer to CARP and still receiving the lectures, and the other group was of more active or full time CARP members as well as younger members of the Family Federation.

Our USA CIG team helped this retreat as STAFF to make the experience for everyone the best they could have.

HYO JEONG WORKSHOP

Hyo Jeong, by definition, is the heart of filial piety that a child develops toward their parent, so it is definitely a powerful core aspect in one's life of faith which is why it was chosen as the theme for the four day workshop our CARP team held in La Finca here in the DR.

The Hyo Jeong participants (around 20 of them) were able to receive education on the life course of our founders, Rev and Hak Ja Han Moon, a talk on having a heart of filial piety, blessing education and other important topics that would help them more deeply expand their relationship with God.

They were also guided to find steps to apply what they learned through the guidances and activities moving forward in the future.

The workshop was and encouraging to help those attending to further understand their value as a children of God and feel empowered to offer something through the lives they lead.

It was a message our team was grateful to also receive and support our brothers and sisters to receive as well.



One of our many amazing speakers, Mr. Regalado, sharing a lecture to the Hyo Jeong workshop participants

DIVINE PRINCIPLE WORKSHOP

The other workshop was the Divine Principle workshop, consisting of 18 participants, ranging from the ages 12-30 years 44. For many of them, this was the first time to receive / listened to the Divine Principle lectures for first time. On the first day of the workshop many of the participants were shy. Not just that but it was their first time for them, to be in a workshop environment such as this; to receive Divine Principle lectures, sing holy songs, put in a place where they were encouraged to be themselves.

But day by day as they received divine principle lectures they had fun doing many activities and interacting with each other, which allowed them to open up a little by little.



Diana, the MC of the DP group, introducing Mr. Tony who has prepared the Divine principle lecture

By the end of this 4 day workshop, the change in the group was obvious. Looking at the progress from beginning to the end, we started as strangers but could become so much closer, like a family.



ACTIVITIES

We were able to participate in a lot of activities through out the workshop. There was a skit competition, Tongil Moo do practice (Martial Arts), an adventure hike, swimming in the river and many fun games in between! There was also another activity where each team had to create a short, one shot video centered a topic from the workshop, which was pretty fun. Some teams chose the theme of “happiness”, “Love” and “filial piety”.



Every morning all participants participated in Tongil Moo Do practice before breakfast

One of the programs that stood out the most was a letter writing activity we had on the last night of the workshop. We started with a short meditation/reflection about how we see ourselves. Often times we put ourselves down for the mistakes that we make and forget that God doesn't see us that way. So we wrote 4 letters: the first being an encouraging letter to ourselves, the next to our parents, third, a letter of confession, and lastly, a letter of determination for moving forward, especially after what we've learned through the workshop. From the beginning of the activity to the end, sniffles could be heard throughout the room. It was a deep and valuable opportunity to reflect on where we're at in our life and who had helped us get there, while also letting go of our past mistakes, and most importantly challenge ourselves to make a fresh start. At the end we went up the mountain to where a huge bonfire was set up. We shared in teams our experiences in the workshop, but also about our lives at home as well. As we burned our confessions in the fire, a sense of peace could be felt among the participants. It was a heartfelt and way to end the overall workshop experience.



Enjoying the breathtaking view at the top of the mountain after a challenging hike up. It was so worth it!



We gathered around a huge bonfire on the last night, sharing experiences and offering a group prayer to conclude the workshop.

Even though for many people this culture was new, they were able to feel welcomed into the family environment we created all together.

For the near future, our team hopes to prepare a workshop, where we can learn the Principle and grow ourselves even more in our relationship with God and True Parents.



Cheers of Mansei for a victorious workshop!